

Friends of Storeton Woods

Aims and Purposes

Storeton Woods is owned by the Woodland Trust. The aim of the Friends is to assist the Woodland Trust to protect, preserve and improve for the public benefit Storeton Woods and to promote the conservation of the natural animal and plant life therein.

Objectives and Activities

The Friends will help to make public access available by maintaining footpaths and bridleways, undertake general maintenance and repair and inform and educate the public of the natural history and other aspects of the woods. The Friends can also raise money by subscriptions and donations.

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Recovering from the Covid lockdowns, no public events in the woods were organised in 2022, but bat walks, heritage walks and a competition for children are planned to take place in 2023. The aim of such events is to encourage extra interest in the woods and perhaps to recruit more donors. During 2022, twenty work mornings were attended by a band of committee members with up to seven other volunteers. Limited by health and safety regulations, jobs done included cutting ivy from fences and the perimeter wall, pruning back vegetation along pathways, trimming brambles off of our dinosaur carving and litter picking.

Financial Review

Up until nearly the end of 2022, our income was mainly derived from small regular donations of £3 or more per year from people we called “members” Such members who at end of 2022 numbered 350, were entitled to vote at the AGM and in, particular, to elect the committee. However in December 2022 we received a quite unexpected legacy of nearly £106,000. The boost to our funds has enabled us to reassess our reserves policy. The committee is at present considering how to handle these funds. The Woodland Trust employs contractors to carry out work which the Friends cannot do. The major expenditure we have is, normally, to reimburse the Woodland Trust. In 2022 this amounted to nearly £2,700. Another (less major) expense is incurred in producing a quarterly newsletter. This is emailed, posted or hand delivered to our members, although it is available to the general public. The printing cost was £113 and the postage expense is included in the £165.85 we incurred in total.

Friends of Storeton Woods - Accounts for the Year to 31 December 2022

1. Income and Expenditure Account

<u>Income</u>	2022	2022	2021
Subscriptions	£1,725.00		£897.00
Donations	<u>£1,320.24</u>	£3,045.24	£955.60
Legacy	£105,937.50		£0.00
Tax reclaimed	£327.81		£218.62
Merchandise sold	£50.00		£17.00
Bank Interest	£213.68	<u>£106,528.99</u>	£14.40
Total Income		£109,574.23	
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Wood management	£2,696.59		
Insurance	£99.31		£0.00
Merchandise bought	£250.00		£0.00
Wildflower plants	£188.50		£0.00
Printing, photocopying	£113.00		£19.00
Stationery & postage	£161.85		£0.00
Sundries	£334.30		£159.09
		<u>£3,843.55</u>	
Surplus for year (2021 surplus)		<u>£105,730.68</u>	<u>£1,924.53</u>
Bank balances & cash at 31 December 2021		£57,367.50	
Surplus for the year		<u>£105,730.68</u>	
Bank balance & cash at 31 December 2022		<u>£163,098.18</u>	

2. Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2022

Monetary Assets:	CafBank	£163,038.96
	Cash	<u>£59.22</u>
		<u>£163,098.18</u>

Non-monetary Assets (estimated present value in brackets):

Assorted tools (£80), 2 first aid kits (£20)
 paper guillotine (£10), 13 mugs (£71.50), 18 caps (£144)
 heavy duty stapler (£1), 5 framed prints (£20),

3. Notes and Commentary

a) The most significant financial event of the year was the receipt, in December, of nearly £106,000 willed to us by Miss Anona Ethel Jones. Although she was a member of FOSW for several years around the turn of the century, we know little about her. We would like to learn more. At the time of writing this report the Committee is considering how best we can handle the great increase in our capital reserves.

b) Recovering from the effects of the covid pandemic, the membership rose from 270 in 2021 to 350 by the end of 2022 with the consequent increase in subscriptions and donations.

c) The £2,696.59 spent on wood management was used for many of the jobs that might be expected to be needed to have been done in a well maintained wood, such as giant hogweed control and Himalayan balsam removal, tree safety work, vegetation clearance along the paths, grass cutting, etc.

d) In July, Nationwide closed its Treasurer's account to all its customers, so we were forced (very reluctantly) to transfer the cash to our Cafbank account.

e) With the welcome boost to our reserves, we are in the fortunate position to be able to support the Woodland Trust in the maintenance of Storeton Woods for many years to come. We would, though, urge members to continue with their membership. In the event of a threat to the woods or its immediate surroundings from land developers and the like, we would wish to speak for a large body of people who actually enjoy using the woods. Membership costs only £3 per person per year.

D R Tyrrell

Mr D R Tyrrell

Independent Examiner

31 / 3 / 23

P. S Golby

Mr P S Golby

Treasurer

5 / 4 / 23

Reserves Policy

1. Over the years our membership has gradually fallen. In the future it is likely to continue to do so and perhaps at a faster rate if members appreciate how large our funds have become. Over the last few years the amount spent on wood management has averaged at about £2,500 each year. £40,000 should be set aside to cover any shortfall in income in the future.
2. In the event of a threat to the integrity of the woods or their immediate surroundings from land developers and the like legal assistance might be necessary and £20,000 should be set aside to cover this eventuality.
3. £40,000 should be reserved in case the boundary fences require replacing.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Committee of the Friends of Storeton Woods

I report on the accounts of the Friends of Storeton Woods for the year ended 31 December 2022 which I have signed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of independent examiner's report

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanation from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to keep proper accounting records have not been met or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mr D R Tyrell

Bebington, Wirral

12 April 2023

Structure, governance and management

The committee is elected by the members at the AGM. Thereafter the committee is responsible for making all decisions regarding the woods and for deciding how any funds should be spent. The members of the committee, who meet six times a year, elect the officers.

Administrative information

Storeton Woods is bordered by Rest Hill Road, Mount Road and Marsh Lane, Bebington Wirral. The correspondence address is 18 Princes Boulevard, Bebington, Wirral, CH63 5LN.

The committee members are:

John Lee (Chairman)

Paul Wallington (Secretary)

Peter Golby (Treasurer)

Duncan Allender

Shaun Bryan

Helen Danson

Eleanor Haslam

Craig McDonald

George Nelson

Julie Scarsbrook

Jason Walsh